The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news accounts and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor generally in the industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR
WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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WE PLEDGE—
1 BILLION DOLLARS
WAR SAVINGS BONDS
FOR VICTORY

WHOLE NO. 1656 WILLIAM GREEN, President WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, JANUARY 5, 1943 GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer VOL. 33, NO. 1

FACING the FACTS
With PHILIP PEARL

We had an interesting talk the other day with a man well past middle-age who represents our ideal of the good American citizen.

He is a working man. For the past 8 years he has worked in the Washington, D. C., Navy Yard for Uncle Sam. He operates an electric crane in the naval gun factory.

He believes in unions. In fact, he is president of the Electric Crane Operators' Union, No. 251, of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, affiliated with the American Federation of Labor.

This man's name is Ralph Wells. He is a full, quiet, modest citizen. He told us, incidentally, that six of his sons have enlisted and are now serving in the armed forces of the United States.

Our conversation was not private. It was broadcast over the length and breadth of the United States over the facilities of the National Broadcasting Company. We hope you heard it. It will long be missed an interesting reminder of the fact that the great majority of the boys in uniform who are risking their lives to save America are workers, themselves or the sons or brothers of working men and women.

Keep Standards Intact

Every once in a while the American people—and especially those who make and administer their laws—need to be reminded of this fact. We hear too much and too often from those who would like to drive a wedge between the production soldiers serving on the home front and the fighting soldiers serving on the battlefront.

These selfish and wholly unpatriotic propagandists delight in drawing odious comparisons between the conditions of workers serving in factories owned by private interests and the conditions of our men in uniform.

They keep harping on the fact that while our uniformed defenders get only $50 a month and have to risk their lives when called upon, factory workers in our war industries are for the most part well paid and safe.

Such propaganda is designed to make the American people forget that these soldiers, sailors and marines are for the most part come from the great army of workers, that they are fighting to preserve the American way of life and the standards American labor has won after years of struggle. When this war is over, the soldiers will feel that they have fought in vain if these standards have been destroyed behind their back. They will feel cypped if they have to go back to work at starvation wages and under sweatshop conditions.

Yet these are the very objectives of the anti-labor campaign!

And while we are talking about "safe" jobs, it might be well to point out that since this war started twice as many soldiers of production have lost their lives in industrial accidents as have our soldiers, sailors and marines in action against the enemy.

Threat To War Bond Program

We had another interesting talk last week with a representative of the United States Treasury Department. We discussed War Bonds. We agreed that the tremendous purchases of these bonds by American workers out of their weekly pay is a remarkable testimonial to the patriotism of these workers and their confidence in America's future. We further agreed it would be well to encourage and facilitate the purchase of bonds through the payroll allotment plan as much as possible.

For there again is a movement on foot to scrap the entire voluntary war bond program and put into effect a system of "compulsory savings." Under this plan, the Government would direct employers to "dock" 10 per cent of each employee's pay each week and turn the money over to the Treasury which would give the workers bonds in return.

Such procedure is repugnant to the free spirit of American labor and would destroy all the benefits derived from the voluntary plan. Furthermore, it is doubtful whether it would raise much more money than is being voluntarily poured into the Treasury now.

When a man of his own free will buys war bonds out of his weekly earnings, sacrificing the things he may badly need out of patriotic motives, it gives him a lift and a feeling that he is helping to win this struggle. When he is forced to buy bonds, his morale is impaired. He becomes a critic of the war effort rather than a collaborator.

We appeal to the common sense of Congress to decide which is the better method.

MORE BAD NEWS FOR HITLER!

Production Gains Reach New Highs; Nelson Doubles Quotas For 1943

Washington, D. C.—Donald M. Nelson, chairman of the War Production Board, announced that American war plants made the largest gain in production in the history of any month since the United States began its rearmament program.

Mr. Nelson's "box score" of gains registered in November over October output in the most vital production fields follows:

Airplanes, 18 per cent.
Ordnance, 13 per cent.
Army and Navy vessels, 9 per cent.
Merchant vessels, 26 per cent.
Other munitions, 9 per cent.

The nation, he said, spent $244,500,000 a day in November for war purposes.

The war material that rolled off the nation's assembly lines last month, he said, was about four and one-third times greater than the production in the month preceding the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor.

Mr. Nelson said the government expected to produce in 1943 about double the munitions output of the last 12 months.

"Total war expenditures in 1943," he said, "should exceed $100,000,000,000, compared with more than $52,000,000,000 in 1942."

Mr. Nelson predicted continuing gains in plane production.

"From now on deliveries of airplanes should increase considerably from month to month as new plants come into operation and progress is made in production and materials scheduling."

"Production of self-propelled guns, particularly useful in tank warfare, showed exceptional progress," he said.

"Production of most types of Army and Navy ammunition rose markedly."

"In November," he said, "American shipyards produced 80 merchant vessels with a total deadweight tonnage of 874,000t. This was the same number of vessels produced in October although the tonnage was slightly lower. Measured by the dollar value of work put in place on vessels in shipyards, production of merchant ships was up 26 per cent, compared with a decline of 10 per cent in October. Work done on cargo vessels alone increased 38 per cent."

Workers Will Exceed 1943 Quotas, Meany Says On "Labor For Victory"

Washington, D. C.—Rising to the challenge of America's needs for victory, labor will exceed production quotas in 1943 and produce the goods, AFL Secretary-Treasurer George Meany declared in a "Labor for Victory" broadcast.

A special feature on the same program was an interview with Wayman C. Pincham, commanding war worker of Silver Spring, Md. Mr. Pincham, who has six sons in the armed forces, celebrated his twenty-seventh anniversary of work in the Washington Navy Yard on Jan. 3. His contributions to the war effort were noted in a letter of congratulations from Secretary of the Navy Knox, which follows:

"Dear Mr. Pincham: With your six sons in the armed services of the United States—five in the Coast Guard and one in the Army—you fully appreciate the necessity of supplying our fighting men with the weapons of war on time.

"Your appearance on the A. F. of L. 'Labor for Victory' radio program should serve as a forceful reminder of the close bond of kinship that exists between our fighting men and our war production workers.

"As president of your A. F. of L. local, you can do much to give your membership the right kind of wartime leadership. I am sure that production will increase to the utmost. Congratulations on your 27 years of faithful service as a civilian employee of the Navy Department.

"Sincerely,
"(Signed) FRANK KNOX,
"Secretary of the Navy."

Mr. Pincham is president of Electrical Workers Local 1501, AFL, and International Representative of Electrical Workers. Asked to comment on the spirit of his fellow workers in the Washington Navy Yard, who are making guns and torpedoes for America's fighting ships, he said:

"They are working long hours, most of them 7 days a week, and they are working hard. All of us know how important it is to produce guns and torpedoes for the Navy and we are pushing them out as fast as we can.

Mr. Meany said that just like the Pincham boys of Maryland, hundreds of thousands of sons, brothers and relatives of trade unionists are today serving in the Army, the Navy, the Marine Corps and the Coast Guard. Many, many thousands of union men are themselves in the fighting service.

"We must never make the mistake of thinking that there is a gulf between soldiers and workers. Actually, our fighting men, most of them, are wage-earners who have temporarily laid aside their overalls or white collars and put on uniforms to answer their country's call," Mr. Meany added.

"Every worker and every worker's family, just like every other patriotic American in the nation, is trying zealously to do everything that can be done to help win the war.

"Labor did a good job in 1942. But we know that we can top our own laurels. We can't sit back. 1942 was just a warmup compared with what we have facing us in 1943.

"To our far-sighted Commander-in-Chief, President Roosevelt, and to our brave allies, we send this simple New Years message:

"American labor will come through in 1943. American labor will do all that it is called upon to do—and a little more besides. In 1943, labor will deliver the goods!"

Social Diseases In War Time

By JACOB A. GOLDBERG, Ph.D.
Secretary of the Social Hygiene Committee
New York Tuberculosis and Health Association;
Public Health Consultant, American Federation of Labor

ARTICLE II

If ever a man was a sample of physical health, William was the fellow. He weighed at least 185 pounds, was five feet ten, had rosy cheeks, a powerful grip, and was married to the finest girl in the world. "I'm a very sympathetic Ward; I am not crazy; there is nothing wrong with me; why don't you let me out, Doctor; I want to go back to my work; I want to be with my wife and daughter."

It was a sad tale. William was only 35. He had been a steady worker, earned a top salary for his occupation, and provided a fine home for his beautiful wife and lovely daughter. He was the last person on earth that was the matter with William. All she could state was that suddenly he became abusive. He squandered what funds he had, began to come home late, became careless in his dress, and for no reason whatever, became suspicious of his wife and daughter, even accusing his wife of gross infidelity.

The doctors in the Psychopathic Ward had seen thousands of such cases. They suspected what his diagnosis was as soon as he was brought in by the police upon complaint of his wife. The usual examination followed, including a blood test. Of course, it turned out to be positive for syphilis. In brief, it appeared that while William was serving in a foreign army he contracted syphilis. Treatment was inadequate and, as very frequently happens in such cases, 10 to 15 years later he developed general paralysis of the insane or, as it is called, paresis. He had to be committed to a state hospital for the insane, and we shall not follow him from this point, for modern fever treatment can cure or at least help many patients. But note well that exposure to a venereal infection did; what failure to get adequate treatment resulted in.

Fortunately, with modern treatment for syphilis, the number of cases of paresis is decreasing. Only a few years ago over 10 per cent of all persons admitted to state hospitals for the insane suffered from this dread disease due to syphilis. This figure has already been cut in half. The chances are that it will be further reduced, but only if those who contract syphilis will put themselves under the care of competent physicians or of hospital and health department clinics.

Pittsburgh Street Railway Union Wins $725,000 Higher Wage Award

The National War Labor Board has approved an arbitration award granting wage increases of 14.3 cents per hour to the trainmen and bus operators of the Pittsburgh Railways Co. and the Pittsburgh Motor Coach Co., members of Division 85 and 130 of the Amalgamated Association of Street, Electric Railway and Motor Coach Employes of America.

The award increased the hourly rate of the more than 2,000 one-man car operators involved from 95.5 cents to $1.20 per hour and the rate of the bus operators, numbering 1,200 at the start, 250, from 84 cents to 98.5 cents per hour.

The non-operating employes of the company received increases ranging from 4 cents per hour for those receiving 60 cents to 79 cents, to 8 cents per hour for employes receiving 90 cents and more.

The top rate for shop employes under the award have thus been increased to 99, $1.10, and $1.14 according to the respective classifications. The increases are retroactive to May 1, 1942.

It has been stated on behalf of the companies that the total increases awarded will amount to about $725,000 annually.

Since 1935 and until recently, the wage rate of one-man car operators in Pittsburgh had been the highest in the United States, but the rate has not been increased since 1937. The award restores the former relationship and Pittsburgh, rather than Detroit, again pays the top wage rate.

The bus operators had obtained an increase in their rate in 1941, but the majority of the board of arbitration ruled that the existing differential between their rate and that of the one-man car operators was not justified and that they should receive at least the same increase as the other group.

STATES EMPOWERED TO FIX WAGES OF THEIR EMPLOYES

Washington, D. C.—State and local governments have been empowered to adjust salaries and wages of their employes to conform to certain principles established by Executive Order 9250 and the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act, the National War Labor Board or the Treasury Department.

The decision, announced, the NWLB and the Commissioner of Internal Revenue granted "automatic approval" to any wage moves by a state, county, or municipal agency "necessary to correct inequalities, inequities, or gross inequities as contemplated by Executive Order 9250 and the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act."

The statement urged that state laws embracing the following basic principles should be preserved, except that modification might be necessary to meet the maximum production:

1. A maximum 48-hour week.
2. An 8-hour day.
3. One day of rest in 7.
4. Adequate rest and meal periods.
5. Adaptation of hours of work and working conditions to the age and sex of the workers, except that there be no relaxation of standards governing employment of those under 18 years old.
6. Proper safeguards for health and safety.
7. The same wage rates for women as for men.

It was pointed out that the recommendation as to hours in no way affected provisions of the Wage-Hour Act requiring time-and-a-half pay for all work over 40 hours a week. Reports from the Department of Labor show that practically all-war production plants in the United States are operating at least 48 hours a week.

Reports from the field show that state labor standards have not interfered with war production, the statement said.

Labor Has Kept Its Pledge!

Washington, D. C.—The National War Labor Board jubilantly reported that man-day losses from strikes in war production during November fell to the lowest point since Pearl Harbor.

The losses amounted to only three one-hundredths of 1 per cent of man-days worked for the month. In other words, labor's score in living up to its no-strike pledge was 99.97/100 perfect, the board said.

These figures, the report emphasized, are compiled jointly by the War, Navy and Labor Departments, the Maritime Commission, the War Production Board and War Labor Board, and cover every shipyard and war industry in the nation.

"This board is highly gratified to note that strikes in November dropped to a new low," declared Dr. George W. Taylor, vice chairman of the WLB.

"The figures show that out of every three hours lost to war production through strikes, working men and women, who were faithful to their wartime no-strike pledge, put in 10,000 hours of uninterrupted production."

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Federal War Agencies Warn Against Impairment of State Labor Laws

Washington, D. C.—Seven agencies of the Federal Government, six of them war agencies, warned against blanket suspension of State labor laws.

The War, Navy and Labor Departments, the War Production Board, War Manpower Commission, Maritime Commission and Office of Defense Transportation joined in a declaration that long-time production had been aided by preserving laws regulating hours of work and safety conditions.

They urged that any wage modifications meriting regular session this year and probably considering measures to speed the war effort, the statement of the agencies was issued to State Labor Commissioners in response to inquiries as to whether the war production and transportation programs would result in further impairment of state legislation.

The statement urged that state laws embracing the following basic principles should be preserved, except that modification might be necessary to meet the maximum production:

1. A maximum 48-hour week.
2. An 8-hour day.
3. One day of rest in 7.
4. Adequate rest and meal periods.
5. Adaptation of hours of work and working conditions to the age and sex of the workers, except that there be no relaxation of standards governing employment of those under 18 years old.
6. Proper safeguards for health and safety.
7. The same wage rates for women as for men.

It was pointed out that the recommendation as to hours in no way affected provisions of the Wage-Hour Act requiring time-and-a-half pay for all work over 40 hours a week. Reports from the Department of Labor show that practically all-war production plants in the United States are operating at least 48 hours a week.

Reports from the field show that state labor standards have not interfered with war production, the statement said.

AFL 10-Point Legislative Program Offered to New Congress by Green

AFL Legislative Program For 1943

MANPOWER MOBILIZATION

During the coming months, the new manpower mobilization program will be tested. Millions of additional workers will be needed to produce increased war production quotas.

Under our present setup, workers in any particular industry or locality threatened by manpower shortages may be frozen to their jobs when the Government, management and labor agree such action is necessary. This is the democratic way.

Meanwhile, proposals are being advanced for the enactment of national service legislation involving nation-wide compulsory job-freezing. Such complete mobilization of industrial manpower and womanpower may ultimately be necessary to win the war. Therefore, we will cooperate fully in the application of this objective when we become convinced that such drastic action is necessary.

But we are not yet so convinced. We still do not know with any degree of accuracy whether our manpower needs will be met or whether our manpower resources will fall short. We urge an immediate survey to determine these facts. We further recommend registration of women to learn the availability of womanpower for service in war industries. Finally, we insist that before any compulsory work service is ordered, definite provision be made to protect the economic and social security status of the workers affected.

For these reasons we oppose enactment of national service legislation at this time.

LABOR STANDARDS

Agitation to repeal the 40-hour week standard, as provided for in the Fair Labor Standards Act and other Federal laws, is being renewed. This move constitutes a threat to our entire war economy and a danger to the war production program.

The 40-hour week does not limit working time per man or per factory in war industry. It merely provides a standard for overtime pay.

The legal requirement to pay time-and-a-half overtime for hours worked in excess of 40 a week is no deterrent to employers because they pass along the cost to the consumer.

Nor is the cost of overtime work an excessive burden on the Government. Savings in fixed charges made possible by longer hours of operation and increased production serve to reduce the unit cost of the product the Government buys.

To curtail overtime pay now will throw our war economy out of balance and disrupt the wage stabilization program. If workers lose the additional income they now receive from overtime pay, they will be forced to seek upward revision of basic wage scales to meet high living costs and to pay their debts. They will be less effective if they have greater responsibilities because wage-earners in the family have been called for service in the armed forces.

Repeal or modification of the 40-hour week standard would be equivalent to a pay cut for America's loyal soldiers of production. It would cause unrest and turmoil and jeopardizes the war production effort.

For these reasons, the American Federation of Labor will oppose with all its power any attempt to impair labor standards at this critical time.

SOCIAL SECURITY

Immediate expansion of our social security program is vital to protect the nation against post-war upheavals. Right now, as we pour all our energies into producing for war, we must take out insurance for the letdown when peace comes.

We anticipate that President Roosevelt will ask Congress to expand the social security program and we will press for the prompt adoption of such legislation.

TAXES

It costs money to fight wars and the workers of America realize that Congress will be forced again this year to increase new and heavy taxes.

The Tax Committee of the A. F. of L. is now at work preparing detailed recommendations to Congress. However, even in advance of these specific proposals, we urge that the lawmakers keep in mind these basic principles:

1—That taxes be levied in accordance with ability to pay.

2—That excessive taxes which might cripple industry or sap the strength of the low-income groups be avoided.

3—That every effort be made to continue the War Bond program on a voluntary basis.

PRICE CONTROL AND RATIONING

It is imperative that inflation be prevented. Skyrocketing prices for the necessities of life are just as dangerous as an attack by the enemy. We will insist on price control and effective rationing to curb the greedy in the cost of living. If our present program fails, we will ask Congress for a new law with teeth in it.

Rationing does not frighten labor. We know that when consumer goods becomes scarce in war time some method must be adopted to distribute the available supply fairly. To our minds rationing is the only democratic and practical way to accomplish this objective. We will support every necessary rationing program.

ANTI-STRIKE LEGISLATION

The record of sustained production during the first year of war fully sustains labor's position that voluntary methods can accomplish a great deal more than compulsion.

Immediately after Pearl Harbor, labor and management gave their solemn, joint pledge to the Commander-in-Chief that war production would not be interrupted by strikes or lockouts and that disputes would be settled by peaceful methods provided by the National War Labor Board or agreed to provide that means. It has done a magnificent job.

There has been because of strikes and lockouts has been reduced to a tiny fraction of 1 per cent. Not a single strike was authorized or condoned by the national labor organizations. The occasional local strikes that did occur were promptly halted by the intervention of responsible labor leaders and the rule of the NWLB that it would not consider complaints until the men returned to work.

Nearly every American worker knows now that he injures his own interests as well as the war production effort by striking even under extreme provocation.

In view of the record of the past year and the spirit of sacrifice and self-sacrifice manifested by the overwhelming majority of America's workers it would be foolhardy for Congress to upset the apple-cart now by enacting compulsory anti-strikes legislation.

We pledge that in the coming year American workers will live up to their responsibilities as soldiers of production to a higher degree even than last year.

WAGE STABILIZATION

The greatest tribute that could be paid to the patriotic spirit of the workers of our country is the fact that the drastic wage stabilization program was put into effect last October with scarcely a ripple of protest.

Labor willingly accepted this major sacrifice because of the assurance that inequities and inequalities would be considered and adjusted on the merits of each case through the machinery of the National War Labor Board. We have confidence in the NWLB because it is the one Government war agency in which labor is fairly represented and has a voice in framing policies and making decisions.

It is our hope that the effective administration of the wage stabilization program by the NWLB will serve as an example for any future war program that may be undertaken.

POST-WAR RECONSTRUCTION

A special Post-War Committee of the A. F. of L. is now preparing recommendations for a sweeping program of home reconstruction that can be put into effect as soon as the war ends.

Such a program must be ready for action to prevent the collapse of industry and put America back on the road to peaceful progress.

We urge that Congress authorize an immediate investigation and survey of the possibilities of post-war jobs on the same scale as the nation is now producing for war. We earnestly suggest that the leaders of industry and labor be given full opportunity to present constructive recommendations.

POLL TAX REPEAL

America must erase the blot of the poll tax at once if it expects to face the world as a sincere advocate for freedom and democracy. A bill to accomplish this purpose was passed by the House in the last session and blocked in the Senate only by a filibuster. That disgraceful outrage should be permitted only to shame us. It is the duty of the new Congress to act without delay to abolish the poll tax in the few States where it still exists.

GOVERNMENT WORKERS LEGISLATION

Toward the end of the last session, Congress enacted a stop-gap measure providing extra compensation for some but not all of the Government's civil service employees. This measure, inadequate as it is, expires April 30.

We urge that Congress substitute for this temporary law, a really comprehensive act relieving the long-suffering men and women who do the work of running our Government from the many hardships the war has imposed upon them. We call special attention to the plight of hundreds of thousands of postal employes, many of whom have not had an increase in pay in 10 years.

Opposes Anti-Labor Laws, Urges Social Security And Post-War Plans

Washington, D. C.—President William Green made public the ten-point legislative program which the American Federation of Labor will ask the new 78th Congress to adopt.

The program expressed unreserved opposition to compulsory, anti-labor legislation and called for a modern social security system plus a vast reconstruction plan to meet post-war upheavals.

(A summary of the program is given in adjoining column.) Said

"This program," Mr. Green said, "is the expression of the desires of 6,000,000 American workers and their families. It is formulated upon one basic purpose—that everything possible must be done to prevent the nation's war effort.

"Our program, furthermore, is predicated upon the demonstrated and universal willingness of America's wage earners to make of their own accord the sacrifices the citizens of a nation must bear in war time.

"Let us look at the facts. The workers of our country already have agreed to let the Government subject their way of life to unprecedented war-time controls. They have done this of their own free will. Quietly and without fuss, they have signed over to the Government a temporary waiver of many of their fundamental rights.

"American workers are now pledged not to strike, even against injustice. They are working long hours, 6 and 7 days a week. By accepting wage stabilization, they have given up the right to exert economic pressure for higher awards for their labor. Through the manpower mobilization program they have relinquished the right under certain circumstances to answer the call of new opportunities or even to decide for themselves when and where they shall work.

"These steps were not taken haphazardly or by compulsion. America's war labor program was developed through the processes of democracy. The representatives of labor were given the opportunity to consult, advise and make recommendations to the Government—the United States through the Combined Labor War Board, which meets with him regularly. They were given a voice in deciding specific cases through their representatives on the National War Labor Board.

"These democratic methods have worked. The record of the past year speaks for itself. Since Pearl Harbor, war production has been more than doubled, time lost due to strikes or lockouts has been reduced to one-tenth of one per cent of time worked. In this period, more than 99 out of 99 out of a total of more than 5,000,000 wage earners went out on strike during last November. Never before has the nation enjoyed such a period of sustained, uninterrupted production.

"In 1943 labor will undertake the job of doubling the record-breaking production of 1942. It will be the heaviest responsibility ever placed upon a nation's work force. But I have no doubt that the war production soldiers will more than fulfill the quotas, provided their hands are not tied and their enthusiastic spirit crushed by compulsory and punitive legislation.

"Frankly, I anticipate that legislation of this kind will be introduced during this session of Congress. I need not warn the members of Congress that such proposals are dangerous and harmful and unnecessary. Their good judgment will repudiate the conception of forcing men and women to do that which they are willing to do of their own free will."

STRIKES AT NEW LAW IN NEW YORK STATE

New York City. — A record low in strikes was reached in this state during November, Executive Secretary John A. Fregand of the New York Board of Mediation announced Dec. 30.

In the entire month there were only four new walkouts involving a total of 96 workers. This is the lowest since the board was created in July 1937, before which the records were kept, Fregand said.

TRUCKING UNITS START LABOR-MANAGEMENT PLAN

Washington, D. C.—The first step toward the development of a labor-management program to deal with wartime problems in the private trucking industry was taken at a meeting sponsored by the Office of Defense Transportation.

Attending the meeting were representatives of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (AFL) and the National Council of Private Motor Truck Owners. Presiding were Otto S. Beyer, director of the ODT Division of Transport Personnel, and Joseph P. Rogers, director of the Division of Motor Transport.

It was decided to set up a permanent group of labor and management representatives to work on such problems as manpower shortages in the industry, conservation of vehicles and tires and other war matters.